

Margaret Jane Johnson Cluff

Written by her grand-daughter, Sarah Matilda Cluff Lewis daughter of Hyrum Albert Cluff.

Joseph Johnson was born in a border town of Scotland, England, but we do not know the name of the town for we have not records mentioning it. He was a man of considerable means and owned what is called a Provence in Scotland. The Johnson family lived in a castle and the people of the town were their subjects.

When Joseph became of age he went, with his father's consent to Newcastle, Northumberland, England, and went into business for himself. As his father gave him the money for his venture and bade him goodby, he said,

"Son, come back to Scotland for your wife. Do not marry an English woman."

"I won't, Father, at least without your consent," Joseph answered confidently.

So Joseph went from home to seek his fortune in "Merry England." It was not long before he met Jane Hunt. And the hours spent in her company as they strolled along the paths or walked the streets of town made his promise as though it had never been given. And then there came the happy day when the young man from Scotland and the young lady from England were married.

From the castle in Scotland came a letter. It was a letter to Joseph from his father reminding him of his promise. It was clear that the father knew nothing of his sons' marriage but was taking precautions. Joseph and Jane had a long talk. Joseph was confident that if his family knew his beloved Jane they too would love her. Soon after this, Jane took herself to the castle in Scotland and lodged with the Johnson's. There she worked as a seamstress, keeping herself busy and happy, and doing her work well. She often thought the company of Father Johnson and tried winning him with her pretty smiles and manners.

One fine day Joseph arrived home for a visit. Though it was a hard thing for the newly married couple, who longed for each other's company to do, they acted as if they were strangers. This condition went on for some time. One morning at breakfast his father and son were talking about the young man's future, the father remarked, "Joseph, there is a young lady lodging with us, an English lady, whom I would like you to meet. I would be

pleased if you should take a liking to her. In fact it would be all right if you should want to marry her."

Joseph arose from the table with alacrity. "Let me meet her at once," he said with a show of enthusiasm that surprised his father. Then restrained himself as he followed his father, although feeling more like leading than following. When they were at Jane's room he could hold back no longer but rushed in, in spite of his father's objections. Holding the radiant Jane in his arms Joseph told his father of their love and marriage, and confessed their plot. The father was no less delighted at the turn of events, than surprised and his surprise was great. As soon as he regained composure Jane was taken down to the breakfast room and presented to the family. All were happy.

Jane and Joseph made their home in Newcastle, Northumberland, England. One happy day, 28 August 1848, a baby girl came to bless their home. They named her Margaret Jane. In due time other children came to the Johnson's. They were contented and pleased with their life.

When Margaret Jane was twelve years of age her father, Joseph brought the Mormon Elders home. From that time on the Elders came often and the family listened with joy to their message. The gate to the town of Moor was the jawbones of a whale, and so high was it that a load of hay could pass through. One day the Johnsons and some of their neighbors went through the arch and gathered at the large spring of water. Here the Johnson family were baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Joseph was baptized 1 January, 1853 by William Bell and confirmed by Robert Hazan. Jane was baptized 20 April, 1853 by the same man.

The Johnson family had belonged to the Catholic Church. Joseph had a brother, John, who was living in Durham. In time the news of the conversion of Joseph's family to Mormonism became known to John. His anger knew no bounds. He vowed that Margaret Jane should never grow up to be a Mormon and plotted to steal her away and place her in a nunnery. Joseph and Jane had a good friend living in Durham who heard of John's threats and came secretly to tell them of the danger Margaret Jane was in. The parents were frantic with worry and would not let the girl out of their sight. She was kept home from school and all public meetings. They watched day and night carefully.

The next time the Elders came to Newcastle to visit the saints there, Joseph went to them with his problem. The Elders

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advised Joseph to take his family to America. A ship would soon sail with about 600 Saints aboard. As the mother was unable to travel, she being in delicate health, it was decided to send Margaret Jane to Zion with the Saints. President Glover was in charge of the company.

Much preparation went on in the Johnson home to get ready for the long trip. The girl was delighted at the thought of going to Zion but so sad about the separation from her beloved family. The mother spent much time in giving her council and advice. As Margaret Jane was dressing on the morning she was to leave, her mother entered her room and gave her a large silk handkerchief, telling her to tie it around her waist rather tightly and leave it there until she reached America. That mother had heard that it was a sure cure for seasickness. Margaret Jane did as her mother wished. Soon the sad farewells were over and Margaret Jane sailed away from her mother and father and England never to see them again.

In the company on the ship was an old woman who was alone. President Glover put Jane in her care, and they were to sleep together. When they got ready to go to bed that night the old woman at once made Jane untie the handkerchief which she took and kept. All night the old woman kicked and pinched Jane if she made the slightest move in bed. This was repeated night after night. The old woman threatened to do worse if Jane told anyone. Jane often lay crying quietly because there seemed to be no one to turn to.

A young married couple had made their bed close to Jane's on the ship's floor. One morning the young man remarked kindly, "What is the matter, Jane? I thought I heard you crying in the night. Are you homesick?"

Jane hung her head and said nothing. As soon as she and the woman were alone the woman repeated her threats. That night she pinched and kicked Jane harder than ever. Jane covered up her head and cried herself to sleep, miserable and homesick, and filled with a great longing to be at home with her father and mother. President Glover called Jane to one side and talked to her. The young couple had reported to him what they thought was happening. At first Jane was afraid to talk, but after being assured that she would be taken care of, she told of the old woman's abuse, and how she had been threatened. President Glover placed Jane in the care of the young couple and the rest of the journey was made more

Not long after this Jane became sick with a fever. One day President Glover came to her bed and said, "Jane, I am going to carry you up on deck and see if that will make you feel better." He took her up on deck and took her to the side of the ship. Three sharks would be seen following the ship. He showed her the sharks, and said, "The sharks have been following the ship for three days and nights. They are waiting for you to die so they can eat you, but we are not going to let them do it." The brethren on the ship layed their hands on her head and blessed her. From that moment she began to recover. She soon climbed the stairs to the deck by herself. She learned to sway with the ship when she walked as the sailors did. One day a big storm came up. The great waves tossed and flung the little ship. As the waves rose, the little ship was cast onto a rock where it lay tipped onto one side. Water ran in and had to be pumped furiously to keep the people safe. The Mormons fasted and prayed for help and the rock set it down again right side up on the sea. The storm quieted down and the ship sailed peacefully on its way.

There were some on the ship who were interested in the Mormons and their religion. These people had attended the meetings and read the literature. A few applied for baptism. As the ship was close to land a boat was lowered and these were baptised in the sea. There were others who were angry and stirred up strife, as a few always will. It was a thankful band of Saints who landed in New York ready to begin the long journey across the plains. Jane remained in the care of the young couple. The old woman never left New York and soon returned to England.

As Jane was taking supper one night she could hear a sick man in a tent calling for a drink. Three people had been buried in camp that night. Everyone was afraid to go near those who were sick. The sick man kept begging for water and finally Jane could stand it no longer; she filled a cup with water and gave the man a drink. When he thanked her, he said, "God will bless you for this my child." She hurried out of the tent, but her guardians saw her come from the tent. They were very concerned about her and told her that she should never have gone into the tent as she might contract the disease. The sick man heard them talking to Jane and called out, "She will be alright. God will bless her." Jane was one of the few who missed the sickness.

As they traveled on they encountered Indians. One evening as Jane was cooking supper over the campfire an Indian was talking to her young guardian. Jane was afraid of Indians but the

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young man was having a good time laughing and joking with the Indian. To tease Jane he told the Indian that Jane was a very good cook and would make a very good wife. Finally the Indian asked for Jane. Still joking the young man said,

"Would you give me three horses and seven buffalo robes for her?" The Indian nodded his head, grunted and left. In a few days the Indian was back with three horses and seven buffalo robes. When the man saw how serious the Indian was, he tried to explain that it was only a joke and that Jane was not his to give. The Indian left angrily, but did not go far. A woman of the camp climbed up into a wagon to fix the bed. Her husband had been hunting that day and had laid the gun in the wagon. The woman knocked the gun over and it discharged, wounding her in the shoulder. Everyone came running to see if they could be of help. Jane was sent to a distant wagon ~~with her things~~ to fetch some clean rags. As she climbed out of the wagon with her arms full she saw the Indian standing ready to grab her. She ran to the other side of the wagon to climb down. The Indian again was standing ready to grab her. She screamed and help came at once. The Indian ran into the woods but was seen following the company for days. Jane was kept out of sight in a wagon day and night until it was certain that the Indian had gone. The young man had learned his lesson about joking Indians over selling or trading women.

There was a Danish girl in the company. Although the girl was somewhat older than Jane they became great friends and walked together each day. One day as they were walking the Danish girl became very ill. They stopped and the girls sat down on the ground by the road. The captain came by on his horse. He advised the girls to ride as soon as the wagons came by. The wagons came and although Jane called and called none heard or stopped. She would not leave her friend, and her friend could not walk. The sun went down and dusk came. The girls huddled together as they listened for help. It seemed that long hours had passed when Jane heard it, the sound of squeaking wheels and the drivers calls were very welcome to the girls. Jane at once placed herself in the middle of the road. The wagon came up and stopped and a woman's voice asked,

"What are you doing out here so late at night?"

Jane answered, "My friend is sick and all the wagons have gone on. I thought they would come back, but they haven't."

The good people in the wagon, Brother and Sister Greer, lifted the sick girl into the wagon and took Jane upon the seat with them. Soon they had Jane telling of her home in England and her coming to Zion. And then here came two men riding back searching for the missing girls. The Greers told them that the girls were safe in their wagon, and that they would like to keep Jane with them. They got permission from the captain for Jane to remain with them the rest of the way to Salt Lake. The girl was very happy to go with the Greers.

The Greers had a donkey which they let Jane ride. There were many boys and girls walking along with the company. Jane would ride the donkey on ahead, tie it up and walk on. The first girl or boy to reach the donkey would ride a ways, then tie the donkey up and walk on, leaving the donkey for the next child. In this way the trip was made more pleasant for the children. One day Jane rode on ahead of the rest of the company. She was thoroughly enjoying the ride up hill and down hill. She was in the bottom of a small canyon when she heard the clatter of horses hooves. She looked up and saw a band of Indians coming down the canyon. The Indians didn't know what to think of the donkey. They came close pointing and talking as they surrounded her. Some got off their horses to examine the strange animal closer and Jane got off too, and crouched by the donkey. She crouched lower and lower wondering how she could escape. When she was down on the ground she started crawling away from the donkey. She crawled under an Indian's horse and until she was quite some distance; then springing to her feet she ran for the wagons. The Indians were so interested in the little donkey that they did not notice her as she crawled away. Jane was unhappy over the loss of her donkey but thankful that she had been able to escape.

The long journey across the plains came to an end and Jane was last in Zion. She was often sad and lonesome for her dear ones so far away over the wide ocean. They never did come to America as had been planned. After Jane left a plague swept the town of Newcastle and mother Johnson and the young baby both died in the plague. After some time her father, Joseph, married a woman named Barbara. Margaret Jane's brother, Joseph Johnson, came over one year later and settled in Coleville, Utah.

(According to Perry Cluff, Jane's youngest son, Jane lived in one of Brigham Young's homes until she married Moses Cluff.)

?Jane and another girl from Newcastle, Ann Bond, lived in the home of Moses Cluff in Provo.? Moses had been one of the mission-

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aries who had come to the Johnson's home in Newcastle. The wife of Moses Cluff was Rebecca Langman who was also from England. Jane had arrived in Salt Lake in 1855 and the 22 of April 1857, she married Moses. Ann Bond married Moses sometime before this. The three wives loved each other and the family lived in harmony although the comforts were few, the beds being little more than bunks of straw sticks.

Moses and his brothers built an amusement hall which was used for dances and dramatics. Moses and Jane were "very good on the stage", as the saying is. Many were the plays put on by the Dramatics Club. Moses and Jane were always among the performers.

Children began to arrive at Moses's home. Sorrow came as well. Jane's son, Joseph Ephriam, died as also Ann's second son, Moroni Alma. Ann now had two living sons--David William and Heber Manassa. Jane had a sweet little girl--Jane Cecelia and a son Hyrum Albert. Jane and Ann lived in one house together.

Moses and Rebecca went up to Salt Lake to conference in 1868. Jane was in a delicate condition and Ann stayed home with her.

When Moses and Rebecca returned they had with them, Rebecca's sister, Eliza and her mother Mrs. Langman. Jane's and Ann's sorrow was great to learn that Moses had married Eliza. The young wives were hurt almost beyond endurance. Why hadn't Moses told them? Or waited until he could consult them? In a day or two Ann took her two boys and left home. She got work and declared she would never return, but Jane whose condition would not allow her to go, stayed home. That December Moses Harvey was born to Jane. Moses with pleading and kindness won Jane back to him. Moses also went to Ann and tried to be reconciled with her and get her to come home. Ann at last let the boys go home to Jane and she was to return home after working a while longer. So the two boys went back to Jane, but Ann never came back; instead she went back East and married again and Jane raised David and Heber as her own.

Moses was called to take his family and go to Arizona to help settle up that country. In 1874 they started on the long journey. Wagons were loaded to the bows. Water barrels were tied on the side of wagon boxes; chicken coops were fastened on the back. The boys drove the cows and extra horses along with the wagons each day. Moses now had nine sons to help him and four charming daughters. The Cluffs first stopped for a few years at Showlow, Arizona, while the cattle and horses increased and the children as well. They then journeyed on to Smithville, now Pima,

~~Arizona~~

Arizona where Moses and Rebecca died and are buried. Jane is buried in Thatcher, Arizona.

Margaret Jane Johnson Cluff was a true pioneer. She had the courage and fortitude she needed to travel the long road she came. She enjoyed living in spite of difficulties, hardships and sorrows that came to her. She was talented, gracious, and loved by all.

Here is a little incident that shows her lighter nature. One evening as Moses was ~~xxxxxx~~ carrying in the milk to Rebecca's home to be strained and divided to the three families, Jane, all dressed up in man's attire, passed at some distance in the dusk, headed for her home, and entered it. Moses with a glance went on his way, but the next evening when the same man passed and entered Jane's and Ann's home Moses hastened with the milk and then back to his wives' house. There sat Jane and Ann. Both declared they had seen no man. The fourth night when Moses saw the man approaching his wives home, and he was watching, he set down the buckets of milk at once and followed and so caught Jane in her act and it ended in a big laugh and fun.

Through the country the decendance of her children are proud of the heritage she gave them.

(The first part of this short life story of Margaret Jane Johnson Cluff, was told me by Aunt Lulla Cluff Damron; the last is from other sources: memory of those who knew Grandmother and from the Cluff Family Journal.

Sarah Matilda Cluff Lewis

I read and discussed this with Uncle Perry 15 Oct. 1955 and he said that it was all true.

Eva F. Wirmill